

**Cc:** Mccarthy, Gina[McCarthy.Gina@epa.gov]  
**To:** Blumenfeld, Jared[BLUMENFELD.JARED@EPA.GOV]  
**From:** Caleb Laieski  
**Sent:** Wed 1/13/2016 7:00:05 AM  
**Subject:** New Bay-Delta Water Quality Standards Urgently Needed

Dear Regional Administrator Blumenfeld:

The Environmental Protection Agency knows that the San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary is in big trouble – in August 2012 your office, Region 9, published the “Bay Delta Action Plan” which acknowledged that freshwater flow alteration was one of the most important challenges to the estuary’s health and identified the timely adoption and implementation of new water quality standards by the State Water Resources Control as one of the most important actions that could be done to solve the problem. Your agency expected those standards, adopted in 1995 by the State of California, to be done by mid-2014.

Under the federal Clean Water Act, the Board is supposed to review the standards every three years. But despite the best available science identified by the Board, your agency, and fish and wildlife managers, showing that the 1995 standards are not adequate to protect the estuary, despite the fact that native fish species are declining at record or near-record levels, despite the emergence of new threats to human health like toxic algae, the Board has again pushed back the completion of the standards update to late 2018 – and its track record of meeting deadlines is abysmal. It is entirely possible that 2018 will be too late to save several fish species from extinction and to protect public health from further degradation of Delta waterways.

The status quo is bad enough, but new projects could make things even worse. It is imperative that up to date water quality and flows standards are set before moving forward with approval of such projects, like permitting the construction of new Delta tunnels, also known as the California Water Fix, is even considered.

US EPA delegates the setting of water quality to the states – it is time NOW to take back that responsibility since California’s State Water Board cannot be relied upon to do the job.

Please set a deadline for the Board to complete its update, and be prepared to set federal standards if the state once again fails to meet the deadline. Fish and wildlife are in danger of steep decline and even extinction, and water quality remains at high risk if we wait until 2018 or later. The future of the greatest estuary on the west coast of the Americas depends on immediate action.

Thank you for your time and all you do,  
Caleb Laieski

(Petition signed via: <https://www.change.org/p/blumenfeld-jared-epa-gov-tell-epa-new-bay-delta-water-quality-standards-urgently-needed> )